In the absence of Mr. Park In-kook (Republic of Korea), Mr. Mohamed Cherif Diallo (Guinea), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 57: Globalization and independence

(b) Preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets, in particular to the countries of origin, consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption (A/64/122 and A/64/99)

(c) Science and technology for development (A/64/168)

1. **Ms. Miroux** (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on science and technology for development (A/64/168), drew attention to its salient points. Science, technology and innovation had a crucial role to play in stimulating long-term social and economic development and in helping developing countries to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Appropriate science, technology and innovation policies could ensure that the current crises offered opportunities for changing to a more sustainable mode of development in developing countries, based on low carbon emissions, along the lines of what was currently being done in developed countries. To that end, developing countries would require support to build their technological capacity.

2. Since the development of innovation capacity for sustainable agriculture was essential for poverty reduction, special attention must be given to the challenges facing agriculture in the developing world, and particularly to the needs of microentrepreneurs. In that spirit, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development was planning to go beyond its traditional mandate to follow up the World Summit on the Information Society by addressing themes relating to new and emerging technologies and financial mechanisms and UNCTAD would compile and disseminate examples of good practices showing how some developing countries were building up their technological capacity in new high-growth fields that could create green jobs.

3. **Mr. Vlassis** (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets, in particular to the countries of origin, consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption (A/64/122). Since July, when the report had been finalized, a further five States had ratified the Convention, bringing the number of parties up to 141. At the third session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Convention, to be held in Doha in November 2009, the most important item for decision would be the establishment of a mechanism to review the implementation of the Convention. Although a number of meetings had helped to advance the work of the open-ended Working Group on Review of the Implementation of the Convention, further meetings would be held in an effort to reach consensus on pending issues before the Doha session.

4. One matter on which the States parties were agreed was that the review should be based on their own self-assessments. At the third session of the Conference, the Secretariat would present a self-assessment checklist in a user-friendly software application, which was an improved version of the more limited checklist developed in 2007; it would be easier to complete and would complement work already done under other anti-corruption treaties.

5. Asset recovery continued to enjoy high priority in the work of the Conference of the States Parties. The Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery, which had held its third meeting in May 2009, had therefore refined its recommendations on the creation of cumulative knowledge, the building of confidence between requesting and requested States and technical assistance. Moreover, it had stressed the need for practical tools and guides for the implementation of chapter V of the Convention and networks to build trust and had highlighted the importance of training and capacity-building. The joint Stolen Asset Recovery initiative (StAR) of UNODC and the World Bank was the main medium through which UNODC acted on the Working Group's recommendations. The initiative was further conducting a number of policy studies on related topics which would be presented in Doha.

6. Since one of the main challenges to asset recovery continued to be a lack of access to relevant information, UNODC was currently developing, as part of the web-based Knowledge Management Consortium,

a legal library that would contain laws and jurisprudence related to the Convention, including its chapter V, in addition to a number of practical guides and tools for asset recovery. The Office was also preparing a compilation of cases concerning asset recovery and had requested States parties to submit their relevant cases for that purpose; it had to date received replies from 26 States.

7. In the interests of confidence-building measures, the StAR initiative, in conjunction with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) had in early 2009 launched a database of asset recovery focal points which currently contained data on 66 countries; its further development would be discussed at the third session of the Conference. UNODC also supported the creation and strengthening of regional networks of asset recovery focal points, which could further the dialogue between requesting and requested States.

8. In addition, significant progress had been achieved by the Global Compact Working Group on the Tenth Principle, whose fourth meeting would be held in Doha on 5 and 6 November 2009 and would be immediately followed by the final meeting of the Sixth Global Forum on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity. In view of the growing size and work of the Conference of the States Parties, the Global Forum would then become a public/private partnership forum bringing together political and business leaders.

9. He called on States to continue to engage in constructive dialogue with a view to arriving at consensus decisions at the Conference of the States Parties, particularly with regard to the review mechanisms supported by the Group of Twenty (G-20). The General Assembly could support the Conference by encouraging States that had not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Convention and encouraging its implementation by Member States.

10. The Assembly might also wish to take account of the fact that, as the number of States parties and the dynamism of international cooperation for implementation of the Convention rose, expectations of UNODC would also increase exponentially and that, when States parties reached agreement on the terms of reference of the review mechanism, the Secretariat would be expected to perform a high volume of new and complex tasks. The accomplishment of such tasks would be feasible only if Member States provided UNODC with strong support so that it would have the resources needed to make the Convention's provisions operational and fully effective.

11. **The Chairperson** invited the Committee to engage in a general discussion on the item.

12. **Mr. Daoud** (Sudan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that globalization posed special difficulties to developing countries and had left the least developed among them on the margins of the world economy. The globalization of markets meant that economic meltdowns in developed country markets quickly spread to other markets. Such internationalization of crises brought out the importance of global governance and sound regulatory frameworks that would enable developing countries to enjoy their right to development geared to their own realities.

13. Moreover, while each country bore primary responsibility for its own development, the benefits of globalization could not be shared equitably without strengthened international cooperation and a global partnership for development. That meant giving developing countries greater voice and participation in international economic decision-making and norm-setting, in particular by reforming multilateral institutions and global governance.

14. In an increasingly knowledge-based world economy, access to technology was vital for development and should be made more available to developing countries; it was a major source of inequality between them and the developed world. Such access would help them to advance significantly in agriculture, health, energy, trade, water management and environmental protection.

15. The Group of 77 and China invited the States parties to the Convention against Corruption to take further steps to implement it, notably through initiatives for asset recovery, technical assistance and capacity-building. He stressed the need to continue seeking creative ways to increase collaboration between developing countries and developed countries and their financial institutions in uncovering illicit financial operations, locating the funds and arranging for their return. Progress on trade and investment agreements and the participation of developing countries in international economic decision-making would be crucial to the global partnership for development. In that context, he called on the

international community to give special attention to the needs of the developing countries, the least developed countries, the landlocked developing countries and the small island developing States.

16. **Ms. Ornbrant** (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Armenia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that corruption was a fundamental obstacle to sustainable development. Efforts to combat it must be predicated on the principles of good governance, integrity, transparency and accountability, which, in turn, called for strong legal and judicial institutions. As the first global and legally binding instrument on the subject, the Convention against Corruption was an important step in that direction. The European Union therefore urged States that had not yet done so to ratify or accede to it; the European Union attached great importance to the forthcoming session of the Conference of the States Parties and hoped that it would lead to the adoption of a strong and effective review mechanism, which was a matter of credibility for the United Nations system. It likewise continued to support the further development of the StAR initiative.

17. The European Union also welcomed the joint undertakings of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and UNCTAD and looked forward to further efforts to bridge the digital divide and promote access to technology for development. It gave priority to investments in national universities and science and technology in developing countries, as exemplified by its strategic partnership with Africa, agreed on in December 2007, whereby it would invest up to €63 million in research projects in 2010 in order to improve health conditions and water and food security in Africa.

18. The European Union would like to see a clear connection to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in future reports on science and technology, as well as on corruption.

19. **Mr. Oemar** (Indonesia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that the United Nations had an essential part to play in extending multilateralism and shaping comprehensive measures to address the multiple crises in a globalized world. Financial regulation, as important as it was, could not suffice; nor should solutions be sought through piecemeal measures. The continuing disarray in the world economy reflected a fundamental flaw in the international economic system itself, whose trade, finance and technology transfer structures and mechanisms gave developing countries little say in international economic decision-making.

20. In its deliberations on globalization and interdependence, the Committee should not ignore the contribution of middle-income countries to global and regional development and economic stability. They accounted for two thirds of the world population and nearly 40 per cent of the gross world product; in the past two decades they had become more closely integrated into the global economy and they had the potential to drive new growth all over the world.

21. ASEAN had followed with interest the work of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and UNCTAD, in particular the meeting on global food security co-sponsored by UNCTAD and the Malaysian authorities; the recommendation of that meeting on the sharing of new technologies, particularly information and communication technologies, in agriculture had special resonance in the ASEAN region, as food security would be one of the key issues addressed at the Association's fifteenth summit.

22. As for the fight against corruption, it was a long and arduous process for which ASEAN had been developing cooperation since 2004. The Association had included combating corruption in its Community Blueprint and would continue to resolutely pursue it.

23. **Mr. St. Aimee** (Saint Lucia), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that globalization and interdependence were not only economic in character but also embraced finance, trade, investment, climate change, health, technology, migration and law. Globalization was a source of tangible improvements in the quality of life and choices available to citizens; however, it also had negative consequences, by which CARICOM and the developing world were disproportionately burdened.

24. The Caribbean countries were afflicted by ills that were not of their making, including climate change, illicit trade in small arms and narcotics and the food and energy crises; they also suffered from unfair trade subsidies and barriers. Yet they were models of

good governance, open borders and economic liberalization. Although globalization took no account of the needs of their small populations, it played as critical a role in their development as the decisions and policies of their own Governments. If the World Trade Organization and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development did not make allowances for banana production and the financial services sector in the CARICOM countries, those countries could cease to derive any benefit from globalization.

25. For globalization to be effective, it must be inclusive. Responding to the global economic and financial crisis was not the exclusive preserve of the G-20 countries, no matter how well intentioned. He reiterated the Community's endorsement of the conclusions of the United Nations Conference on the World Economic and Financial Crisis and Its Impact on Development and emphasized the importance of the follow-up process. CARICOM also echoed the Secretary-General's call to maintain and indeed increase levels of official development assistance (ODA) in order to cushion the impact of the crisis, not only in the financial centres of the world but also throughout the developing countries.

26. The CARICOM States had been prematurely categorized as middle-income countries alongside other countries far more capable of weathering external economic shocks and combating the crisis unaided. Their graduation had been based purely on economic development without taking into account their degree of integration at the international level. CARICOM needed the assistance of the United Nations and of other global partners, as well as adequate support mechanisms in order to assume a leading role in the global knowledge-based economy. Globalization offered the CARICOM countries fresh opportunities for economic takeoff in the areas of tourism and financial services; however, to overcome the current challenges to the sustainability of their development, they needed transfers of technology from the developed world so that, as recognized in the report of the Secretary-General (A/64/168), they would be able to take their place in that economy and generate better-paying jobs, increase standards of living, reduce poverty and stimulate economic growth.

27. **Ms. Markoff** (United States of America) said that in a globally networked world, cybersecurity was becoming an increasingly critical issue. As threats to network security multiplied, Governments needed to take a leadership role in ensuring the safety and security of cyberspace. Given the international nature of such threats, international cooperation would be indispensable.

28. In years past, her country had been a leader in drawing the attention of the General Assembly to threats to information technology security. At the current session it intended, along with co-sponsors Australia, Israel, the Marshall Islands and Japan, to introduce a draft resolution commending successful regional and international cybersecurity efforts and offering a generic self-assessment tool to help States evaluate their national cybersecurity needs and strategies. Such a tool would help identify the responsibilities of key stakeholders in society, encourage public/private partnerships at the national level, determine the readiness of the authorities to respond to criminal misuse of information technology, and measure the level of public awareness of the cybersecurity issue. She looked forward to the cooperation of Member States in reaching a consensus on that draft resolution.

29. **Mr. Chen** Ming (China) said that the increasingly transnational nature of corruption had made confronting it all the more complicated and the need for effective international cooperation all the more crucial. Domestically, his country had launched a national anti-corruption coordination mechanism, a national anti-corruption website, and several local anti-corruption pilot projects. Internationally, it took active part in the Conference of the State Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption and supported all implementation efforts, especially with regard to the recovery of stolen assets and their return to their countries of origin. China would become even more involved in international cooperation to combat corruption through information sharing, judicial assistance, capacity-building and technical assistance and hoped that substantive progress would be achieved at the Conference's third session, to be held in Doha from 9 to 13 November 2009.

30. He applauded the work of UNCTAD and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development in helping developing countries to integrate science and technology into their

development plans. His country had been an early leader in promoting development through science and technology, and boasted numerous pathbreaking achievements. Its 15-year plan for scientific and technological development, laid out in 2006, envisioned turning China into an innovation-oriented economy by 2020. Nevertheless, while the Government's support of science and technology had helped to make his country's economy the third largest in the world, its per capita gross domestic product (GDP) was not even in the top 100. It would continue to invest in poverty reduction at home while providing development assistance to other countries to the best of its ability. Greater investment in science and technology, improved strategies for scientific innovation and increased technical assistance to developing countries were all vital to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. UNCTAD must continue to provide support to that end.

31. **Mr. Al-Fayez** (Saudi Arabia) said that for better or worse, globalization was a reality, and in a world where a decline in developed countries' economies affected the economies of developing countries, the time had come to build a new economic system based on new partnerships between the two. Developing countries should have access to the markets of developed countries and capacity-building support to enable them to become competitive. He affirmed the role played by the United Nations, and in particular the Economic and Social Council, in development assistance, and said that his country would continue to fulfil its regional and international commitments in that regard.

32. **Mr. Yono** (Iraq) said that there was international agreement that corruption was a major obstacle to development. His country's Constitution had established an independent Commission on Public Integrity to root out corruption, and it had signed the United Nations Convention against Corruption in March 2008. That same month, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), his country had held a Conference on Good Governance and the Elimination of Corruption, whose outcome document established a multi-agency national anti-corruption organization. In September 2008, UNODC and UNDP had launched a five-year programme to fight corruption in Iraq. His country would continue to promote good governance based on transparency and accountability in fulfilment of its commitments under the International Compact with Iraq.

33. **Ms. Jacobsen Takahashi** (Norway) said that asset recovery, technical assistance and review of implementation were three mutually interdependent aspects of the United Nations Convention against Corruption that had to be maintained in a delicate balance that was acceptable to all State Parties. The Open-ended International Working Group on Review of the Implementation of the Convention had made constructive progress on the terms of reference for a transparent and inclusive review mechanism. Adoption of such a mechanism at the forthcoming session of the Conference of States Parties would ensure that provisions on asset recovery and international cooperation functioned as intended.

34. Illicit financial flows coming out of developing countries had been estimated at up to 10 times the amount of ODA flowing into them. The Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery and the Stolen Assets Recovery (StAR) initiative were both crucial to the development of best practices and training tools for asset recovery. They must be given the broadest possible support. States also needed to conform to Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF) standards for identifying beneficial ownership of domiciled companies and customer due diligence to prevent company domiciliation from being used as a cover for illegal financial flows.

35. **Mr. González Segura** (Mexico), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that the Rio Group hoped that the third session of the Conference of the State Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption would agree on a review mechanism that was acceptable to all States parties. As the Convention gained strong and sustained political commitment, it was important for the General Assembly to express support for it. The Rio Group urged those countries which had not already done so to become parties to the Convention. Anti-corruption strategies should not shy away from targeting the private sector and the issue of bribery. Asset recovery and technical assistance to developing countries should be priorities.

36. He commended the work of UNCTAD and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. Technological innovation in agriculture was essential for reducing poverty in the rural areas where the bulk of poverty in the developing world was

found, and could also contribute to global food security. For that reason, the Rio Group stressed the importance of establishing guidelines for technology transfer to developing countries.

37. The Rio Group also stressed the importance of technological innovation in the creation of information and communication infrastructure, expressed support for the Network of Centres of Excellence that enabled scientists and engineers to update their professional expertise in modern scientific environments, and commended the science, technology and innovative policy reviews being done by UNCTAD.

38. **Mr. Alahraf** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that while globalization offered genuine opportunities to developing countries to acquire new capacities and technologies, it also threatened them with economic dependency. Fairness and stability needed to be restored to the international financial system and efforts by developing countries to diversify their economies should be supported. It was important to recognize that privatization and the free market alone would not produce development, and that conditional assistance made it difficult for developing countries to balance international commitments with national priorities.

39. Corruption, bribery and money-laundering deprived developing countries of resources needed for development. The international community needed to take action against money-laundering havens that operated outside the reach of the law. He commended the UNODC initiative to eliminate safe havens for the proceeds of corruption, and called on the forthcoming third session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption to explore mechanisms to identify and recover illicit assets.

40. Science and technology had an important role to play in development, poverty reduction, food security, disease prevention, educational development and environmental protection. Developing countries should have access to the technology and other tools needed to incorporate the benefits of science into their national economic plans, human resources development strategies and services sectors. Intellectual property rights should not be allowed to stand in the way of closing the technology gap. He expressed support for proposals calling on the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to assist the Economic and Social Council in following up the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.